

Crackdown to clear the air

Ops Selamat PaPa launched to enforce vape and smoking laws

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PETALING JAYA: The Health Ministry has initiated a special operation to enforce the law on smoking and vape offences, paving the way for a possible ban on vapes in the future.

Codenamed, Operasi Selamat Paru-Paru (Ops Selamat PaPa), Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad said among enforcement priorities in this operation were product registration and ban on advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

Under the special ops, enforcement officers will also scrutinise control over the sale and packaging of smoking products, he added.

"Ops Selamat PaPa is done to strengthen the enforcement

under the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024. It is being conducted simultaneously nationwide.

"This operation should give us more clarity, evidence and research in order to ban vapes in the country," he told a press conference yesterday.

Dzulkefly said Ops PaPa would focus more on taking action against the sale and supply of smoking products that violates regulations, and not just targeting smokers such as underaged individuals or those caught smoking in no-smoking areas.

He said that, between October 1 of last year and the present date, a total of 281,381 premises had been inspected, and enforcement actions were taken.

"This operation is an important step towards protecting the



On the ground: Dzulkefly during the Ops Selamat PaPa around KL Traders Square, Kuala Lumpur. — FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

younger generation from the dangers of smoking products, including the widespread use of electronic cigarettes and vapes.

"Through Ops Selamat PaPa, we will form a strategic collaboration with the police to execute operations against the sale and manu-

facturing of smoking products that are mixed with drugs," he added.

Also involved in the operation are authorities from Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry, the National Kenaf and Tobacco Board, Customs Department and local authorities.

Ministry mulls over timeline for vape ban

KUALA LUMPUR: The Health Ministry will present a proposed timeline to the cabinet for a full ban on the use and sale of electronic cigarettes or vapes, pending input from health experts.

Its minister, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, said the ministry was awaiting recommendations and feedback from the health expert community before taking further action.

"As for a timeline, I cannot provide an exact date. What I can confirm is that we will continue to review and evaluate the matter."

"Once the expert community submits its recommendations to the ministry, we will present them to the cabinet for consideration," he said at a press conference after the launch of Op Selamat Paru-Paru (Op Selamat PaPa) here yesterday.

Dzulkefly said the ministry was in the educational enforcement phase of the Control of Smoking Products for Public Health Act 2024, which regulates vaping products and is scheduled for full enforcement from Oct 1.



Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad checking a vape shop during the launch of 'Op Selamat Paru-Paru' in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. NSTP PIC BY MOHAMAD SHAHRIL BADRI SAALI

While the act provides a legal framework for regulation, he said the ministry was moving towards a total ban on vape products based on mounting scientific and medical evidence, including real-life cases.

"I want to reiterate that the question is not if a ban will happen, but when. It is only a matter of time."

"We want this to be executed thoroughly, not hastily, as there are significant legal implications, public health concerns and evidence that must be carefully scrutinised."

"We will proceed with a detailed, evidence-based approach," he said.

He added that any decision regarding a full ban would also need to consider legal and policy implications and the ministry was committed to a measured approach taking into account all relevant factors.

On Op Selamat PaPa, he said 281,381 premises have been in-

spected nationwide, and 459 investigation papers have been opened for various offences.

Of these, 340 cases were opened under Section 7 for offences related to advertising smoking products.

"Another 68 investigation papers were opened under Section 14 for selling smoking products not in accordance with prescribed pricing and conditions."

"Fifty-one investigation papers were opened under Section 15 for manufacturing, importing, or distributing smoking products that do not comply with packaging and labelling requirements," he said.

He added that upon conviction, first-time corporate offenders face a fine of RM20,000 to RM100,000, imprisonment of up to two years, or both.

For repeat offences, the penalty increases to a fine of RM50,000 to RM300,000, imprisonment of up to three years, or both.

Malaysia setuju mengenakan tarif sifar 6,911 produk dari AS

Beberapa 'garis merah' berjaya dipertahan ketika rundingan tarif timbal balas

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Kuala Lumpur: Malaysia bersetuju menurunkan kadar tarif kepada sifar, bagi 61 peratus atau 6,911 daripada 11,260 baris tarif (produk) yang diminta Amerika Syarikat (AS) dalam rundingan timbal balas dengan negara itu.

Menteri Pelaburan, Perdagangan dan Industri, Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz, berkata langkah itu adalah sebahagian daripada usaha untuk memperkukuh akses pasaran dan menggalakkan aliran dagangan, dua hala yang lebih terbuka antara kedua-dua negara.

"Inilah pendekatan yang sistematik dan teratur untuk menentukan tawaran akhir Malaysia kepada AS, dan kami telah mengemukakan tawaran komprehensif yang merangkumi 99

peratus daripada semua baris tarif, namun hanya bersetuju meliberalisasikan 61 peratus daripadanya.

"MITI menyifatkan pengurangan tarif ini sebagai keputusan menang-menang bagi Malaysia dan AS. Ia juga mencerminkan hubungan dua hala yang kukuh yang dibina sejak 68 tahun lalu.

Beliau berkata demikian pada sidang media berkaitan tarif AS di sini, semalam. Yang turut hadir Timbalannya, Liew Chin Tong.

Tengku Zafrul berkata, susulan rundingan itu juga, Malaysia mengenakan tarif sifar peratus ke atas 6,911 produk yang diimport dari AS dan daripada jumlah itu, 191 produk baharu mewakili sektor pertanian, manakala 1,347 daripada sektor perindustrian.

Dalam perkembangan berkaitan, Tengku Zafrul berkata, Malaysia turut mengumumkan komitmen membeli 60 pesawat Boeing secara berfasa, dengan nilai keseluruhan sekitar AS\$19 billion (RM81.27 billion) sebagai sebahagian daripada kerjasama perdagangan dan pelaburan dua hala.

"Dalam usaha menangani defisit dagangan dengan AS, kerajaan akan melaksanakan perolehan utama termasuk pembelian pesawat Boeing.

"Malaysia Aviation Group



Sektor farmaseutikal Malaysia antara dikecualikan daripada tarif 19 peratus dikenakan Trump
(Foto hiasan)

(MAG) telah komited membeli 30 pesawat Boeing bernilai AS\$9.5 billion bagi fasa pertama dan tambahan 30 pesawat Boeing lagi bernilai AS\$9.5 billion bagi fasa kedua yang telah diumumkan Perdana Menteri sebelum ini," katanya.

Tengku Zafrul turut berkongsi beberapa 'garis merah' yang berjaya dipertahankan negara dalam rundingan tarif bersama AS, yang membawa kepada pengurangan kadar 19 peratus bagi Malaysia.

Mansuh lesen import

Katanya, ia antara lain membatalkan pengenaan duti eksais; pe-

mansuhan lesen import bagi produk dari AS; liberalisasi pegangan ekuiti syarikat dalam sektor strategik negara; serta hak keistimewaan Bumiputera.

"Mereka meminta kita menghapuskan duti eksais, seperti mana yang anda tahu, duti ini dikenakan kepada tiga item iaitu kereta, tembakau dan minuman keras.

"Industri automotif penting bagi AS, namun kita juga punya industri automotif, kita menggaji 700,000 pekerja dalam sektor ini dan kita juga punya kereta nasional dan rantaian bekalan yang pelbagai.

"Dalam industri lain, kita ti-

dak ada duti eksais. Semua ini bagi mereka tidak adil, namun negara-negara (pengekspor) lain turut berdepan situasi sama. Kita ada polisi sendiri bagi memastikan kita terus kekal kompetitif.

"Buat masa ini, saya rasa kita belum bersedia lagi untuk menghapuskan halangan tersebut. Begitu juga dengan pegangan ekuiti dalam sektor strategik, serta beberapa permintaan mereka untuk mengkaji semula undang-undang pada platform digital," katanya.

Sementara itu, Tengku Zafrul berkata, eksport semikonduktor dan farmaseutikal Malaysia ke AS dikecualikan daripada tarif 19 peratus dikenakan—oleh Washington setakat ini.

Sambil menyifatkan keputusan rundingan tarif itu sebagai saling menguntungkan untuk Malaysia dan AS, beliau berkata, Washington bagaimanapun masih mengkaji undang-undang perdagangannya bagi meneliti sama ada tarif sifar peratus bagi sektor-sektor ini adalah adil. Beliau berkata, garis masa bagi semakan itu ditetapkan pada Disember 2025.

"Andalannya (menerima semakan itu) menjelang Disember, namun mungkin juga lebih awal lagi," katanya.

PHARMACEUTICALS AND SEMICONDUCTORS EXEMPTED

Tengku Zafrul also insists no deal was reached with US on exclusive supply of rare earths

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MALAYSIA'S pharmaceutical and semiconductor exports remain exempt from United States tariffs, said Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz.

"Exports of semiconductors and pharmaceutical products remain at a zero per cent tariff," the investment, trade and industry minister said at a media briefing yesterday.

This comes as the US imposed a reduced 19 per cent tariff on Malaysian imports.

Tengku Zafrul said the broader 19 per cent levy on Malaysian goods would begin on Aug 8.

He also clarified that no agreement was reached with the US or any other country on the exclusive supply of rare earths, pushing back on speculation that Malaysia had made concessions in the critical minerals sector.



Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz says Malaysia's sovereign rights were not compromised throughout the discussions. BERNAMA PIC.

"In fact, no such request has been made by the US so far," he added.

Rare earths access remains a sensitive issue in US trade negotiations, especially as China dominates 90 per cent of global processing capacity.

Similar discussions are also taking place between the US and Indonesia.

Tengku Zafrul said Malaysia held firm on several key matters throughout the discussions, including the protection of its financial sector, Bumiputera policies and government procurement practices.

"Malaysia's red lines were not crossed, nor were our sovereign rights compromised."

He added that Malaysia would continue to advocate for zero tariffs on commodities such as cocoa, rubber and palm oil exported to the US, which are currently subject to 19 per cent duties.

As part of broader economic engagement, Malaysia has committed to buying an additional 30 Boeing aircraft in a deal worth US\$9.5 billion, matching the value of an earlier acquisition phase.

Tengku Zafrul said Malaysia would continue to impose excise

duties on US cars, tobacco and alcohol.

He also said halal imports from the US must still comply with certification requirements set by the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia.

Elaborating on the "red lines", Tengku Zafrul said the tariff cut to 19 per cent was achieved without compromising Malaysia's sovereign right to maintain key policies for socioeconomic stability.

"This positive outcome was the result of continuous engagement between both countries through various bilateral platforms, and reflects the high level of complementarity between Malaysia and the US in trade and investment over the past 60 years."

He said the 19 per cent rate was broadly in line with tariffs imposed on other Southeast Asian countries.

"Most importantly, Malaysia's position did not shift on matters within our red lines."

"The US decision reflects the strong and enduring economic relationship between the two countries, and Malaysia's credibility as a trusted trade and investment partner."

Tengku Zafrul said a joint statement from Malaysia and the US was expected to be issued over the weekend.

Doktor didakwa palsukan dokumen pekerja domestik

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BUKIT MERTAJAM: Seorang doktor didakwa di Mahkamah Majistret di sini semalam atas pertuduhan memalsukan dokumen iaitu borang pendaftaran pekerja domestik, tiga tahun lalu.

Tertuduh, Dr. Winnie Ong Beng Cheen, 44, bagaimanapun membuat pengakuan tidak bersalah selepas pertuduhan terhadapnya dibacakan di hadapan Majistret Nurul Rasyidah-Mohd Akit.

Berdasarkan pertuduhan, ibu tunggal kepada empat anak itu didakwa memperdaya Per-

tubuhan Keselamatan Sosial (Perkeso) untuk mempercayai bahawa borang pendaftaran pekerja domestik yang ditan-datangani oleh Cheah Chyuan Yong adalah benar.

Tertuduh didakwa dengan sengaja mendorong Perkeso untuk mendaftar pekerja domestik warga Indonesia, Nurhayati Hasan sehingga menyebabkan Cheah Chyuan Yong diperdaya untuk membuat caruman sebanyak RM20.60 sebulan.

Perbuatan itu didakwa dilakukan di No 22A, Jalan Mesra, Taman Saujana Permai, Bukit Mertajam pada 21 November 2022.

Atas kesalahan itu, dia boleh

didakwa mengikut Seksyen 417 Kanun Keseksaan yang memperuntukkan hukuman penjara sehingga lima tahun atau denda atau kedua-duanya sekali, jika sabit kesalahan.

Pendakwaan dilakukan Timbalan Pendakwa Raya, Nor Shakila Dahari manakala tertuduh diwakili peguam, Chiang Kian Hong.

Nor Shakila kemudiannya menawarkan jaminan sebanyak RM10,000 dengan seorang penjamin selain mengenakan syarat tambahan iaitu perlu menyerahkan pasport kepada mahkamah sehingga kes selesai.

Bagaimanapun, dalam rayuannya, Kian Hong memohon

agar mahkamah menetapkan jaminan minimum selain tidak menerima syarat tambahan yang ditawarkan oleh pihak pendakwaan.

Nurul Rasyidah kemudiannya menetapkan jaminan sebanyak RM5,000 dengan seorang penjamin terhadap tertuduh dan menetapkan 4 September depan sebagai tarikh sebutan semula kes.

Terdahulu, tertuduh turut menarik perhatian ketika tiba di mahkamah apabila menunjukkan tanda 'peace' ke arah lensa kamera ketika gambarnya dirakam oleh beberapa pengamal media sambil berkata: "Ambil lagi gambar saya."